

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LENDING 00654 011324Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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-----011341Z 022188 /45

R 011238Z JUN 77
FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3187
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L L E N I N G R A D 0 6 5 4

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, PINS, PINT, CSCE, UR
SUBJ: RUHKIN ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS PROCEED WITHOUT INCIDENT

REF: A. LENINGRAD 537, B. LENINGRAD 461, C. MOSCOW 7113

1. SUMMARY: LENINGRAD AUTHORITIES--UNDOUBTEDLY SATISFIED THAT THEY HAVE OVERALL DISSIDENT SITUATION WELL IN HAND HERE--PERMITTED THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES SURROUNDING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF RUHKIN'S DEATH (REFTELS A&B) TO TAKE PLACE WITHOUT HARRASSMENT, AND WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY SHARP FOLLOW-ON REACTION FROM AUTHORITIES THIS TIME AROUND. END SUMMARY.

2. EXCEPT FOR REFUSAL PRESEL TRAVEL TO LENINGRAD (REFTEL C), WHICH WAS PROBABLY AT LEAST PARTIALLY LINKED TO EVENTS, AND SOMEWHAT STEPPED-UP SURVEILLANCE OF CONGEN OFFICERS, THERE WAS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF POLICE AUTHORITIES' USUALLY OBVIOUS AND HEAVY HAND. THERE WERE NO MILITIA OR POLICE CARS HOVERING ABOUT AT VARIOUS EVENTS AND AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, NO ONE CONNECTED WITH EVENTS HAS BEEN CALLED IN FOR SPECIAL INTERROGATION. NOR HAS THERE BEEN ANY RETALIATION THUS FAR AGAINST ANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS.

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3. RUHKIN ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS WENT AS PROGRAMMED (REFTELS A&B) WITH MORNING MASS AT NIKOL'SKY CATHEDRAL AND GRAVE-SITE RELIGIOUS SERVICE MAY 24 FOLLOWED BY EVENING SERVICE AND EXHIBITION AT RUHKINA'S APARTMENT SAME DAY. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY SCHEDULED EXHIBITIONS OF RUHKIN'S WORKS AT APARTMENTS OF NATALIYA KAZARINOVA AND GEORGIY MIKHAILOV MAY 25 ND 26.

4. OVER THE WEEKEND (MAY 27-19) NATALIYA KAZARINOVA ALSO HELD MODEST EXHIBITION OF NON-OFFICIAL ART IN HER APARTMENT FEATURING WORK DEDICATED TO RUHKIN BY OSCAR RABIN. EXHIBITION CONTAINED PAINTINGS BY MOSCOW ARTISTS OSCAR AND SASHA RABIN, AND WORKS OF ABOUT 15 LENINGRAD NON-OFFICIAL ARTISTS. A NUMBER OF PAINTINGS CONTAINED CLEAR POLITICAL COMMENTARIES. DESPITE SHORT NOTICE WITH WHICH EXHIBITION WAS SET UP, WORD OF ITS EXISTENCE GOT AROUND QUICKLY AND KAZARINOVA TOLD US THAT IT WAS ATTENDED BY SOME 150 PEOPLE ALREADY ON THE FIRST DAY. KAZARINOVA, WHO IS STILL BITTER ABOUT FIRING OF HER HUSBAND FOLLOWING LAST NON-OFFICIAL EXHIBITION AT HER APARTMENT, IS RELAXED ABOUT ANY KGB REACTION THIS TIME, TAKING LINE THAT THERE IS RELATIVELY LITTLE MORE WHICH AUTHORITIES CAN DO TO HER.

5. MEANWHILE, CITY CULTURAL AUTHORITIES CANCELLED V. OVCHINNIKOV'S EXHIBITION SCHEDULED BE HELD MAY 15-30 AT YUSUPOV PALACE, (REF A) UNTIL AFTER FORTHCOMING JUNE 19 REGIONAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS. YUSUPOV PALACE IS BEING USED AS AN ELECTION AGITPUNKT AND THE AUTHORITIES APPARENTLY HAVE HAD SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT USING BUILDING SIMULTANEOUSLY AS SITE OF AN EXHIBITION OF UNOFFICIAL ART. WHETHER OVCHINNIKOV (WHOSE WORKS AGAIN WERE ON DISPLAY AT LATEST KAZARINOVA EXHIBITION) WILL EVER BE PERMITTED TO EXHIBIT AT YUSUPOV PALACE IS NOW SOMEWHAT PROBLEMATIC. TIME IS PROBABLY RUNNING AGAINST HIM, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE CULTURAL OFFICIALS EARLIER

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ADMONITION TO OVCHINNIKOV THAT NO EXHIBITIONS OF NON-OFFICIAL ART WILL BE PERMITTED IN LENINGRAD BETWEEN JULY 1 AND 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS.

6. COMMENT: ABSENCE OF ANY POLICE REACTION IS PROBABLY LARGELY DUE TO FACT THAT THERE WAS NO ADVANCE PUBLICITY OR BUILD-UP IN WESTERN MEDIA OF EVENT, AND CONCLUSION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES THAT BEST WAY TO INSURE THAT CELEBRATIONS REMAINED NON-EVENT WAS TO STUDIOUSLY AVOID ACTIONS LIKELY STIMULATE SUCH INTEREST. IN ADDITION, KGB HERE PROBABLY IS SATISFIED IT NOW HAS DISSIDENTS CONTAINED AND INTIMIDATED TO THE EXTENT THAT IT CAN TAKE SOMEWHAT MORE RELAXED STANCE. NEUBERT

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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